

**Minutes of Special and Regular Meeting of November 9, 2016
One Twin Pines Lane, City Council Chambers**

**SPECIAL MEETING
CALL TO ORDER 6:15 P.M.**

STUDY SESSION

Comprehensive Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan

Public Works Director Oskoui stated that the City of Belmont has been working on this plan for the past 18 months. He noted that a grant from the MTC (Metropolitan Transportation Commission) initially funded the project as part of the Complete Street Policy. He noted there are other policies driving the plan for safer streets for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Ruta Jariwala, TJKM Transportation Consultants, pointed out that the City of Belmont has limited sidewalks due to the steep terrain, and has no consistent or continuous bike routes. She explained that the plan is to create multi-modal means of transporting pedestrians and bicycles. She reviewed the purpose, goals, objectives, and the components of the plan, and described various classes of bike lanes. She provided bicycle and pedestrian collision history. She outlined the community input and key needs. She explained that the plan would be implemented in phases.

Discussion ensued regarding Class 3 bicycle routes. Public Works Director Oskoui cited the need for more education for the driving public regarding sharing the road. He noted that some projects in Phase I are already under way.

Mary Morrissey Parden, Belmont Chamber of Commerce, stated that she was involved in some of the stakeholder meetings. She cited the importance of not losing on-street parking for businesses.

Gina Javier, Commute.org, stated that she also attended stakeholder meetings, and provided input that was ultimately included in draft plan.

Attended by: Councilmembers Hurt, Lieberman, Kim, Stone. Mayor Reed was absent.

ADJOURNMENT at this time, being 6:55 P.M.

**Terri Cook
City Clerk**

**REGULAR MEETING
CALL TO ORDER 7:00 P.M.**

ROLL CALL

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT: Hurt, Stone, Lieberman, Kim

COUNCILMEMBERS ABSENT: Reed

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Police Chief DeSmidt.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Kathleen Beasley, Belmont Library Branch Manager, provided an overview of the County Library Annual Report, and outlined programs for all segments of the community.

John Violet, Friends of Belmont Library, outlined fundraising efforts to provide financial support for library programs.

Mary Morrissey Parden, Belmont Chamber of Commerce, announced an upcoming grand opening for Ladera Nursery. She noted that Waterdog Tavern is now open at the Carlmont Shopping Center.

Perry Kennan, Belmont resident, commented regarding Measure I. He suggested that the City Council put together a plan for how to spend funds, and get community input.

COUNCILMEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilmember Lieberman commended all who helped pass Measure I.

Councilmember Stone thanked the community regarding Measure I. He announced an upcoming Veteran of the Year luncheon at Hiller Aviation Museum. He commented regarding the opening of Waterdog Tavern.

ITEM APPROVED ON CONSENT CALENDAR

Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of October 26, 2016

Councilmember Kim requested that the minutes be amended to more accurately summarize his comments relative to the Climate Action Plan.

ACTION: On a motion by Councilmember Kim, seconded by Councilmember Hurt, the Consent Agenda was unanimously approved, as amended (Reed absent).

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Amendments to the City Code and the Belmont Zoning Ordinance (Ordinance No. 360) pertaining to permissible home size in (R-1) Single-family Residential Districts; CEQA:

Negative Declaration and Addendum

Senior Planner DiDonato noted that the proposed amendments affect only the R-1 zoning districts. He described the factors that governed maximum home size, including slope, FAR (floor area ratio), height, setbacks, residential design criteria, and design measures. He provided a comparison of the current proposed changes to those which were proposed in July of 2015. He described the cap on home size in surrounding cities. He noted that the demand for home size has increased, although household size is down. He outlined factors that would limit scope of projects that would result in larger homes. He pointed out that that newer homes and substantially remodeled homes are built to better standards.

Senior Planner DiDonato confirmed that 81 percent of lots in the R-1A, B, and C zones are less than 10,000 square feet; therefore the 3,500 square foot cap remains under the recommended zoning change.

Senior Planner DiDonato reviewed the Planning Commission recommendations relative to design standards, setback, views, privacy, and average FAR of homes within 300 feet. He explained that the CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) review resulted in no significant impact relative to the proposal.

RECESS **9:05 P.M.**
RECONVENE: **9:15 P.M.**

Vice Mayor Stone opened the Public Hearing. He suggested that the City Council consider taking testimony this evening, and continuing the item to a future date for deliberation and action, similar to the method used by the Planning Commission.

Tran, Belmont resident, expressed support for the current cap and current floor area exception process. She made recommendations regarding the floor area exception process. She cited privacy issues with larger homes.

Birgit Merian, Belmont resident, expressed her opposition to the zone change. She pointed out there is no demand for large homes. She recommended improving the exception process. She noted that the City of San Carlos passed a moratorium following the influx of larger homes after standards were relaxed.

Bessie Ip, Belmont resident, expressed opposition. She noted that larger homes would be out of scale with neighboring homes. She expressed concerns regarding privacy and views.

Connie Tettenbom, Belmont residents, suggested eliminating the fee for the exception process. She stated that the proposed sliding scale too generous. She recommended larger setbacks for second or third stories. She expressed a desire to protect views.

Ed Chan, speaking for his parents who are Belmont residents, opposes the proposal. He noted that

larger homes impact views and privacy. He commented regarding the previous Paddington Court proposal.

Senior Planner DiDonato clarified the proposed Paddington Court home as it relates to the proposed regulations. He noted that it exceeded 5,000 square feet and did not meet the new proposed setbacks. Under the proposed new regulations, the home would need to be relocated on the site, and privacy and views would need to be addressed.

Jeff Lien, speaking for his parents who are Belmont residents, opposes the new cap and opposes oversized homes.

Denise Bolbol, Belmont resident, stated that views are important. She noted that 5,000 square feet is just as arbitrary as 3,500. There is not a high demand for larger homes. She recommended fixing the process if it is a problem.

Senior Planner DiDonato outlined public workshops held on this topic. He noted there were a wide variety of opinions.

Maya Fallaha, Belmont resident, expressed support to simplify the floor area exception (FAE) process, and recommended excluding garage space from floor area. She pointed out that there are no options for a larger home on her property in the HRO (Hillside Residential Open Space) zone. She is not able to transfer density from another lot not in the HRO zone. She recommended applying the FAE to the HRO zone.

Michael O'Neill, Belmont resident, expressed concerns regarding increased energy consumption and environmental consequences of larger homes. He commented on pending requirements for achieving net-zero energy consumption. He expressed support for a lower cap of 2,500 square feet if the home is not at net-zero energy.

Claus Wallacher, Belmont resident, stated that privacy is important, and noted that privacy issues can exist with smaller homes. He pointed out there is not a demand for larger homes. He noted that the floor area exception process can address a demand for a larger home. He commented regarding options for a modest home versus two smaller homes, and noted that a larger home is a better option from an environmental standpoint.

Daniel Pierce, Belmont resident, stated that energy efficiency can be achieved without remodeling or enlarging the home, and that population density is likely to increase with larger homes. He suggested modifying the floor area exception process and including view and privacy in design review.

Pat Kelleher, Belmont resident, commented regarding the disparity between the people at the workshops and the signatures on the referendum. She expressed concerns regarding privacy and aesthetics with larger homes.

Karen Shane, Belmont resident, pointed out that some homes are non-conforming due to subsequent changes in zoning standards. She recommended modifying the zoning regulations so those homes would be in compliance. She suggested that there should be no expectation that neighbors' homes are going to stay the same. She expressed support for the 5,000 cap, and for considering modifications for lots less than 10,000 square feet.

Kristin Mercer, Belmont resident, suggested that the ordinance is to appeal to wealthy owners who want large homes. She expressed environmental and energy concerns.

Scott Barton, Belmont resident, stated that character and charm should be considered in home design. He pointed out that larger homes on larger lots can be sustained. He spoke regarding fees for seeking a variance, and noted that housing size caps are not reasonable. He expressed support for the 5,000 square foot cap and suggested excluding garages from floor area.

Perry Kennan, Belmont resident, expressed support for smaller, more efficient houses. He pointed out that any number is arbitrary. He noted that 70 percent of speakers at the Planning Commission were against raising cap, and tonight's figure is 80 percent.

ACTION: On a motion by Councilmember Kim, seconded by Councilmember Hurt, the Public Hearing was closed.

MEETING EXTENSION: At this time, being 10:25 P.M., on a motion by Councilmember Lieberman, seconded by Councilmember Kim, the meeting was unanimously extended to 11:00 P.M. (4-0, Reed absent).

Councilmember Lieberman suggested seeking a compromise in this matter. He pointed out that no one in the R1E and H zoning districts that allow 4,500 square feet homes have complained about large homes. He noted that the issue is not about size but about setbacks and placement on the lot. Larger lots can support larger homes, and the size of home should not be dictated by remodel or reconstruction. New standards should apply to remodeled homes above 3,500 square feet. The floor area exception process should apply if legal nonconforming is to continue.

Councilmember Kim expressed a desire to remove unnecessary barriers while protecting the public's interest and the neighborhoods. He pointed out that it is unlikely that many larger lots will be able to sustain the larger maximum size due to the other standards. He noted that home size is subjective, and Belmont should not be compared with other cities. He pointed out that birth rates are going down, so adding floor area is not likely to affect density. There is not a large demand for floor area exceptions. He recommended maintaining the existing cap and revising the floor area exception process, including adjusting the fee and exempting garage and under-floor space from being counted as floor area.

Councilmember Hurt suggested making necessary zoning changes that are being requested by homeowners, not developers. She recognizes that some people are fearful of housing size explosion.

She noted that the City Council acknowledges that concern, but there is a need to provide relief for homeowners who need extra space for a variety of needs for their families. She recommended providing more flexibility with remodeling needs, and to encourage improvement of older homes. She concurs with the staff recommendation to provide floor area equity, and that larger homes should be allowed on larger lots. Placing the same cap on all properties does not allow people to realize the full rights and investment in a larger lot. She noted that another important goal is managing incremental growth. She would like to promote investment in homes, which in turn promotes investment in the community.

Councilmember Stone provided a history of this issue. He pointed out that many cities have no maximum square foot caps and do not have large homes. He noted there are other ways to control home size, and suggested adopting best practices from other cities. Design guidelines prevent oversized homes. He clarified that he could consider removing garage from floor area, and concurred with others that crawl space/under floor space should not be counted since it does not affect view or privacy. He expressed concerns regarding existing nonconforming homes. He noted that density is not an issue relative to this discussion.” He noted that the City Council has demonstrated leadership in environmental issues. Belmont is a member of Peninsula Clean Energy. He expressed support for implementing changes for a small percentage of residents who need relief. He stated that the Planning Commission proposal is a reasonable solution.

MEETING EXTENSION: At this time, being 11:00 P.M., on a motion by Councilmember Hurt, seconded by Councilmember Kim, the meeting was unanimously extended to 11:30 P.M. (4-0, Reed absent).

ACTION: On a motion by Councilmember Lieberman, seconded by Councilmember Hurt, this matter was unanimously continued to November 22, 2016 (4-0, Reed absent).

COMMISSION, COMMITTEE, AND COUNCIL INTERGOVERNMENTAL ASSIGNMENT UPDATES, AND STAFF ITEMS

Verbal report from Councilmembers on Intergovernmental (IGR) and Subcommittee Assignments

Councilmember Kim reported that at a recent San Francisco Airport Roundtable meeting, conflicts between the FAA allowance of more traffic and noise issues in neighboring cities was discussed.

Councilmember Stone spoke regarding a recent fundraiser for Habitat for Humanity. He also noted his final attendance as primary delegate to the South Bay Waste Management Authority meeting, and spoke regarding a recent Library Joint Powers Authority. He commented regarding a recent ride-along with the Police Department.

Verbal report from City Manager

City Manager Scoles announced that nominations were being taken for the upcoming Beautiful Belmont Awards. He commented regarding followup from the passage of Measure I and the need to

take implementation measures. He clarified that an agreement with the State Board of Equalization would be needed, and that the tax is not likely to be implemented until April 1. There will also be a need to form a citizens' oversight committee. He pointed out that with the passage of Proposition 64 dealing with recreational marijuana, there may be a need to address regulations as a city.

ADJOURNMENT at this time, being 11:20 P.M.

Terri Cook
City Clerk